

*Preliminary Amendment*

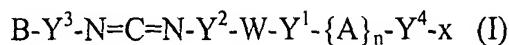
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The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Please cancel Claims 2 and 4-13.

1. (Currently Amended) A fluorescent group-containing carbodiimide compound precursor having a halogen atom or a sulfonic acid group which is represented by the following general formula (I):



Wherein,

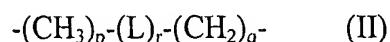
X represents a halogen atom or a sulfonic acid group;

A represents a functional group selected from the group consisting of  $-CH_2-$ ,  $-NHCO-$ ,  $-CONH-$ ,  $-O-$ ,  $-S-$ ,  $-NR^1-$  wherein  $R^1$  represents a linear, cyclic or branched saturated or unsaturated aliphatic hydrocarbon group having 1-20 carbon atoms,  $-NR^2R^3-$  wherein  $R^2$  and  $R^3$  each independently represent a hydrogen atom, a linear or branched saturated or unsaturated aliphatic hydrocarbon group having 1-20 carbon atoms, or a cycloalkyl group, an aryl group or an aralkyl group which may have a substituent, provided that when one of  $R^2$  and  $R^3$  is a hydrogen atom, the other represents a linear or branched saturated or unsaturated aliphatic hydrocarbon group having 1-20 carbon atoms, or a cycloalkyl group, an aryl group or an aralkyl group which may have a substituent, or  $R^2$  and  $R^3$  may be bonded to each other to form as a whole a nitrogen-containing heterocyclic group which may contain an oxygen atom,  $-COO-$ ,  $-OCO-$ ,  $-NHSO_2-$ ,  $-NHC(S)NH-$  and  $SO_2NH-$ ;

n represents 0 or 1;

W represents a direct bond or a quaternary onium group;

$Y^1$ ,  $Y^2$ ,  $Y^3$  and  $Y^4$  each represent a functional group represented by the general formula (II):



wherein, L represents a functional group selected from the group consisting of  $-CH_2-$ ,

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-NHCO-, -CONH-, -O-, -S-, -NR<sup>1</sup>- wherein R<sup>1</sup> has the same meaning as defined for the formula (I), -NR<sup>2</sup>R<sup>3</sup>- wherein R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup> have the same meanings as defined for the formula (I), -COO-, -OCO-, -NHSO<sub>2</sub>-, -NHC(S)NH- and SO<sub>2</sub>NH-; p and q each represent an integer of from 0 to 20; and r represents 0 or 1;

B represents a hydrogen atom or a monovalent organic group ~~being either the same as or different from W Y<sup>1</sup> [A]<sub>n</sub> Y<sup>4</sup> X in the formula (I)~~; and

Any of the functional groups represented by B, Y<sup>1</sup>, Y<sup>2</sup>, Y<sup>3</sup>, Y<sup>4</sup>, A and W may contain a group selected from a carboxyl group, a sulfo group, a phosphono group and a phospho group which have substitution of an alkali metal, an alkaline earth metal or a basic group containing a nitrogen or phosphorus atom.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Original) The fluorescent group-containing carbodiimide compound precursor according to Claim 1, wherein at least one functional group selected from B, Y<sup>1</sup>, Y<sup>2</sup>, Y<sup>3</sup>, Y<sup>4</sup>, A and W in the formula (I) has at least one group selected from a carboxyl group, a sulfo group, a phosphono group and a phospho group which have substitution of an alkali metal, an alkaline earth metal or a basic group containing a nitrogen or phosphorus atom.

Claims 4-13 (Cancelled).